

McCue, Kevin

From: brianna.randall@gmail.com on behalf of Brianna Randall [brianna@clarkfork.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 02, 2011 3:29 PM
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Subject: Please oppose SB 233 and SB 239
Attachments: 02.02 oppose SB 233 and SB 239.doc

February 2, 2011

Senate Natural Resources Committee

Oppose SB 233 and SB 239 to Protect Our Clean Water

Dear Ms. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

The Clark Fork Coalition respectfully requests a "do not pass" on both bills before you today in committee. Both SB 233 and SB 239 would compromise Montanans' clean water.

SB 233 would limit citizens' ability to make important decisions about how their communities grow and prosper. How? By essentially making MEPA compliance "voluntary" for private projects – projects that are not sponsored by state agencies. This will hamstring ordinary Montanans and local governments interested in conducting environmental assessments. In addition, the language on Lines 3-5 on Page 5 prohibits the state from reviewing potential impacts beyond our borders. Rivers, groundwater, and air do not stop at political boundaries, and this language unnecessarily puts Montanans' public health and safety at risk.

SB 239 threatens our drinking water statewide by hindering enforcement of clean water standards for any TSEP-eligible (not just TSEP-funded) community water system. This bill is completely unnecessary, as well as potentially devastating for public health. If the state cannot properly enforce and administer communities' drinking water, there's no assurance that our water is safe.

On behalf of our 2,600 members who live, work, and play in western Montana, the Clark Fork Coalition strongly urges the committee to reject SB 233 and SB 239. Thank you for your time, and for considering the potential negative impacts of these bills. We appreciate your dedication to our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Brianna Randall
Water Policy Director

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